



August 25, 2004

OKLAHOMA BULLETIN NO. OK360-4-23**SUBJECT: PER – Promotions and Transfers of Conservationists**

Purpose: To clarify district conservationist, soil conservationist, range management specialist, grazing land specialist, tribal resource conservationist, and biologist certification, transfer and promotion policy.

Expiration Date: September 30, 2004

In February 2002 Oklahoma amended Section 180, Part OK409.9 of the General Manual to clarify conservation planning and nutrient/pest management certification requirements for employees with conservation planning responsibilities. The policy outlined specific requirements for all NRCS employees who have conservation planning and application as a duty in their position descriptions. The policy was amended in November 2003 to clarify time frame requirements for achieving certifications.

The General Manual certification policy for district conservationist, soil conservationist, biologist, range management specialist, grazing land specialist, and tribal resource conservationist were revised this month to clarify certification requirements as follows:

- Level 1 conservation planning certification within one year of assuming planning responsibility.
- Level 2 conservation planning certification within eighteen months of Level 1 certification
- Maintain Level 2 conservation planning certification as prescribed in OK409.9(f)
- In addition, soil conservationists, range management specialists, grazing land specialist, and biologists at the GS 7 level must complete certification requirements for nutrient management and pest management within one year of assuming planning responsibility, and prior to being promoted to a GS-9. Employees at or above the GS-9 level when the policy was amended (November 2003) were given until February 1, 2004 to complete nutrient and pest management certification.
- Employees new to NRCS in Oklahoma that have conservation planning as a part of their job description will have one year from their date of appointment to complete Level 1 conservation planning certification, nutrient management, and pest management certification. Level 2 certification requirements shall be reached within eighteen months of Level 1 certification.

Additionally, a letter was sent to all soil conservationists, range management specialists, and grazing land specialists in January 2004 providing policy guidance as follows:

- “Beginning immediately soil and range conservationists at the GS-7 level will be relocated to another field office upon their completion

of basic requirements needed for promotion. Upon relocation the employee will be promoted to the GS-9 level”.

- “Oklahoma NRCS will no longer leave GS-5, 7, or 9 field level soil conservationists and range management specialists in one location more than two years, unless specific circumstances dictate”.

The certification requirements and policy criteria listed above are being used by Oklahoma Management as basic criteria in determining approval of promotion requests. The attached form will be utilized by management to ensure all certification and other requirements for promotion have been met by the employee before promotions will be processed. Employees and supervisors should actively pursue opportunities to meet the certification/policy requirements.

These policies were put into effect to ensure a well trained, efficient workforce that is fully trained and certified to meet workloads across the state. Oklahoma NRCS values the professionalism of its employees and wants to provide every opportunity for career advancement. We are committed to providing our partners and clients with the best professional technical assistance available. Questions concerning contents of this bulletin should be directed to the appropriate Assistant State Conservationist (Field Operations).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Darrel Dominick', written in a cursive style.

M. DARREL DOMINICK
State Conservationist

Attachment

DIST: AE

Request for Promotions*

I certify that _____ has made satisfactory progress and is ready to assume additional responsibility as a _____ at the GS _____ level.

The following certifications have been achieved and are being maintained by the individual

_____ Level I Conservation Planning

_____ Level II Conservation Planning

_____ Nutrient Management Certification

_____ Pest Management Certification

_____ GS 7 soil conservationist/range management specialist/grazing land specialist/biologist has completed all requirements for promotion and it is recommended the employee be promoted to the GS 9 level at the time of relocation.

District Conservationist

Date

ASTC (FO)

Date

* To be completed for soil conservationist, range management specialist, grazing land specialist, or biologist with planning responsibility